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CHRISTIAN WITNESS AND NATIONAL POLICY

With the atomic age, thermonuclear weapons, and the conquest of outer space, we have broken down the gates into tomorrow. All major problems assume entirely new dimensions. We can take many lessons with us into the future. But we cannot go back into the simpler, safer world we knew.

When the atomic scientists organized a decade ago, they began publication of a bulletin for which atomic scientist Alex Langdorf's wife Martyl designed the first cover. It showed a clock. The hands were set at ten minutes to midnight.

When the Russians exploded a nuclear weapon, the hands moved to five minutes to midnight.

With the detonation of the H-bomb, a more recent cover set the hands of the clock at two minutes to midnight.

Valid convictions must reckon with this swift change of events. A few years ago agreement to prevent a nuclear arms race was a live option--not now. A year ago long-range missiles were experimental. Today they are in production. Months ago outer space was without spheres and void of man-made satellites. Now it is occupied, and opportunity for preliminary agreement has passed.

National policy holds that limitation of Soviet Communism is our primary aim. The equation is simple: Defense equals security. We are filling in the gaps of a pluralistic weaponry calculated to provide national security at every level. All other matters of budget, trade, colonialism and the like are counted secondary and incidental. In fact, the Administration has so stiffened its attitude that attempts to raise related problems such as the dangers of accidental war, radioactive fallout, and the like are brushed aside.

Meanwhile new types of weapons are being sketched on the drafting boards of all major powers. Key advisers frankly admit the calculated risk of war, which we will never intentionally start but which may be thrust upon us either by enemies or events. Prudential diplomacy strangely entwines with expediency and opportunism.

In all this, religion is giving an uncertain witness. A distinguished group of scientists, political experts, and theologians met in New York recently to discuss ethics and foreign policy in the light of conditions created by thermonuclear weapons. One participant reports that the scientists so sensed the potential devastation of total war that they considered it better to submit to an enemy than to annihilate civilization. Meanwhile, the theologians were busy trying to provide a rationale for at least limited war.

What is national policy really saying? There is no quibble over the pacifism of small segments of the Church; no quarrel with the purpose of churchmen to mitigate the harsher elements of armed conflict. The divergence is deeper than this.

Since the Oxford and Amsterdam conferences, the Church has declared that war, as a particular demonstration of sin, is contrary to the will of God. In our Social Creed its methods are contrasted with the methods of Jesus. This view policymakers hold to be moralistic and unreal. War, they contend, is less evil than ascendancy and domination of the Russian power elite.

All concur that political conditions today are set in the context of two new facts: uncompromising Communist totalitarianism and thermonuclear war. One large H-bomb contains more destructive force than all the bombs used by the belligerent nations in World War II, plus an aftermath of radioactive hazard. Yet this is less weighty, proponents contend, than the ruthless and intransigent character of the foe. Political realism makes this choice. It holds any other utopian and theoretical.

Yet, perhaps we still have not thought radically enough about these new conditions. For instance, a decision of war or peace in an atomic age does not lie with the nations or their peoples. Options of major war or peace depend solely on the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. To be precise, confronted with thermonuclear war, they rest with a handful of leaders in the two countries. Put bluntly, the right of the majority of citizenry in the Western world to draw breath each continuing moment depends on the sufferance of less than half a dozen men. So high has the power pyramid soared! This new fact challenges sharply the very meaning of democracy. All other rights and subordinate privileges of democracy are as intact as ever. But, as long as the possibility of thermonu-

clear war exists, the right to life itself for perhaps two-thirds of our population no longer rests in the hands of the ordinary citizen.

Not all changes are unpropitious. The mediating role of the United Nations continues. Russia herself is challenging the United States to a scientific and economic contest. With our accent on free competition, this ought to be just our type of testing.

Economic aid, for which all proponents had to pull hard last year, is now seen in a new light by responsible people. World trade is necessary if nations are to thrive. Trade between nations is a two-way street, trafficless unless flowing in both directions.

Prior to World War I, industrialized Europe was a vast machine shop drawing its raw materials elsewhere and retailing to the whole world. With industrialization, Russia followed the pattern, and abetted by the collectivization of agriculture, destroyed its place as "the breadbasket of Europe." Only the United States can produce regular crop surpluses which, under proper trade conditions, can furnish the food margin of a score of nations.

The miracle of our age is the unshackling of power. The witness of the Church concerns the utilization of power for peaceful ends in the light of mankind's most valid aims. Power is not to be condemned or eschewed; of itself it is amoral. Power may serve many ends; it must serve the needs and hopes of men in the broadest possible fashion.

The Church appraises current policies and trends from two vantage points. First, from the viewpoint of persons: What does this do to the individual? Then, from the standpoint of humanity--the universality of mankind: What happens to Man? The particular and the inclusive--the self and the Kingdom--these foci converge in all our judgments.

We perceive as churchmen the many rights and values developed in the nation. But we perform for the nation an invaluable service in bringing appraisal from the singular viewpoints of our concern. No other human institution save the Church assays this role with such unswerving persistence.

Continually, then, the Church is confronted with three tasks: to sustain the nation insofar as it contributes to the course of righteousness on earth; to be the conscience of the nation when it would jeopardize either the individual person or the international family; and, finally, to be the penitence and contrition of the nation, whose policy before other great powers must be "right," but which stands also under the objective judgment of God.

The Nation, chiefly concerned as conserver of political values, has not always proved alert or adept at recognizing fully the fundamental changes we have undergone. Nor can nations clearly discern where their interests are primary and where their purposes have become peripheral. Thus, the charge of sentimental "idealism" hurled at the Church's antipathy to war, concern for disarmament, and quest for the peaceful rapprochement of races and nations may prove to be a sophistry of self-interest rather than a valid accusation. Where the aims of the State and the Church prove divergent, protest is the immediate but least important work of the Church. Let it instead expand its works of help and reconciliation. Let it demonstrate to the nations the kind of community for which Man was created.

Peace is not achievable until those who work for peace are as bold for the risks of peacemaking as those who balance precariously on the tightrope of political realism. The pathway of peace is both costly and perilous. Now that the note of "sacrifice" is again popular, how strange that those who would buy security outbid those who seek to establish true conditions of peace.

The validity of the Christian witness must be tested both by fidelity to fact and fealty to God. The many new factors spin us as dizzily as our globe turns. We must know--and there is little time to learn! Let us then make known our hard-won convictions. In the gravity of these times, silence and inaction are treason both to God and man.

--D.E.T.

SCIENTISTS URGE BAN ON NUCLEAR TESTS

The Federation of American Scientists, a national organization of 2200 scientists and engineers, is calling for the United States to favor actively an international agreement to end the testing of large nuclear weapons. Its executive committee has prepared a proposed congressional resolution which would declare this to be U. S. policy.

The proposal includes the establishment of a UN agency to supervise monitoring procedures needed to insure adherence to such an agreement. The Federation proposal is based on the following reasons:

1. A ban on tests would not adversely affect U.S. weapons development more than it would Soviet development, possibly less;

2. A ban would slow down development of intercontinental ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads;

3. A test ban would prevent rise of new nuclear powers;

4. Scientists are confident that all hydrogen bomb tests can be detected and even large A-bomb tests;

5. A ban would eliminate increases in the radioactive fallout which now threatens the welfare of mankind;

6. A ban might serve as the first step to more far-reaching disarmament agreements.

More information on this proposal and a statement explaining why scientists disagree as to the extent of danger of radioactive fallout can be obtained from: Federation of American Scientists, 1805 H St., N.W., Washington 6,D.C.

MISSILE THREAT DEMANDS A CHANGED SPIRIT IN POLICY MAKING

Currently United States and Soviet policies ave provoked an arms race in the field of intercontinental and possible stellar space weapons which--unless stopped--will lead almost inevitably to the devastation of the larger part of the earth. Granting that there are in the present situation deterrents which reduce the risk, the continuation of the present arms race constitutes the peak of insanity.

Let it be granted that the present deterrents can be counted upon in the immediate future; the question still remains whether the risk is not too great and the deterrents balance too fragile a foundation for our international policy and too uncertain for the hope of mankind for genuine world peace.

These facts seem to demand radical change in American--and, indeed all--international policy. Certainly, greater efforts must be made to find the process for stopping the East-West arms race. We hope both the Soviet Union and the United States have as their chief aim the search for and acceptance of means for ending the arms race.

The present relative stalemate undoubtedly must stand for a limited time. But even now, the Church should consider whether or not it can give its ethical consent to the necessity for weapons whose devastation power greatly exceeds the devastation wrought by the worst storms, floods and earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, not to mention other types of destruction man has experienced. Can the Church remain calm and uncritical, accepting as inevitable the development of weapons which permit the wiping out at one stroke of the largest cities in the world? Must not the Church exert itself to the utmost in helping to find the human basis, the social relations, the people's contacts between East and West, the solutions to the core problems that must be solved that the children of mankind may inherit a world moving on toward cooperation rather than one with but few embers of life left?

During this period larger and more heroic methods for mutual understanding between East and West are certainly possible: for more friendly contacts, for a larger expression of goodwill for each other, for the relaxation of tensions and mutual agreement for the awakening of new hope instead of tolling the gongs that sound the doom of all mankind. We can set up processes for changing the basic attitude between Russians and Americans. We can together search for the technical and social means by which all mankind may work for a peaceful world under the conditions of a rapidly changing science that in a sense exposes a larger universe than man had dreamed could exist.

We can create a willingness to face these changes in the spirit of faith and hope rather than in the spirit of a creeping fear which could precede the world's final devastation.

Let us seek with sincerity and perseverance East-West understanding that will place scientific discoveries involving intercontinental weapons and interstellar space under the United Nations' international agency for this purpose.

We can mutually abstain from the use of the veto on purely pacific methods for cease-fires, reducing threats to the peace, and supporting the United Nations Emergency Force where it is needed for patrol. We can cooperate through the United Nations and its specialized agencies in a war to eradicate poverty, disease and illiteracy. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have vast resources which could be applied to this purpose.

We can shift from cold war processes to better understanding of the ways in which the resources of East and West may both be used in lifting world economic levels especially in underdeveloped countries. It would seem possible to reach agreements regarding an increasing amount of freedom on the part of individual nations, provided there is cooperation in economic relations between the large nations and the smaller.

Could we not spell out agreements permitting frank and honest exchange and presentation of information between the peoples of the United States and Russia? One has faith to believe that if the peoples of both countries could come into a common knowledge of each other, and by frankness and boldness in their policies dissipate fear, there would be some hope of moving out of the present stalemate which stands between us and the tragedy inherent in the weapons of mass annihilation.

Is it not possible to do more in honoring each other's educators, workers, inventors, scientists? Would it not have been a better policy than we have followed in our hysteria if, when we learned that Sputnik had been launched, we had cabled the top scientists of Russia inviting them to come to the United States to receive honors and awards for their great achievement? With goodwill, creative spiritual attitudes, and the power of imagination to look beyond the doom of war and find the paths to peace, mankind can avoid the nightmare of devastation and move more surely into the kind of world toward which goodwill, education, travel, science, and common sense are trying to lead.

-- C.F.B.

The United States government has contributed a total of $7,000,000 to the World Health Organization for its campaigns to eradicate malaria. WHO and UNICEF are cooperating in a global effort to wipe out this disease which not only infects some 250,000,000 persons each year but also has had a crippling effect on the economies of many nations, especially those predominantly agricultural.

CONCERNING CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CONCERNS

The President Advised

Early in January it was obvious that two positions on disarmament and reaction to Russian proposals were represented by Mr. Stassen and Mr. Dulles. Many Methodist peace leaders were sympathetic to the flexible Stassen point of view which represented "meeting the Russians half-way."

Lawrence Giese of the Wisconsin Conference sent a letter to all the churches in his conference with the caption Eisenhower needs your advice. "Disarmament negotiations have reached a stalemate due primarily to the inflexible and negative attitude of the State Department. Harold Stassen, who has a major role in handling disarmament negotiations, does not share this point of view...It is therefore suggested that you wire or write the President at once, asking him to support the Stassen position."

Other conference leaders acted similarly. Rev. R. A. Bivens of the Memphis Conference, in which there are 120,000 Methodists, wrote to the President: "When the National Security Council debates the question of disarmament next week, I hope you see fit to support the view of Mr. Stassen. This view does not represent any concession to the Soviet Union, but will do more to keep the way open for continued negotiations."

Attention Conference Members!

In the summer and fall of 1958 in four key places in the nation, the Boards of Temperance, World Peace, and Economic and Social Relations will hold REGIONAL CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RELATIONS BRIEFING CONFERENCES for all members of their annual conference boards. The schedule is as follows:

South Central - July 8 - 11, Mt. Sequoyah
Western - September 16 - 18, Salt Lake City
North Central - Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, Chicago
Northeastern - October 28 - 30, Buck Hill Falls

This year there will be no Southeastern Regional Christian Social Relations Conference, but it is hoped that such will take place in 1959. Reverend Daniel Taylor, however, will lead a seminar on peace and international affairs at Junaluska August 10 to 15.

These regional briefing conferences were established by the Board of Temperance several years ago and have proved very valuable in the training of temperance leaders in annual conferences. This board has graciously invited the Boards of World Peace and Social and Economic Relations to join with it in this new and larger venture.

All persons present at these conferences will worship together at the beginning of the day and hear general presentations in the evening. During the morning and afternoon the three sections will meet separately to discuss their own programs and work. Further information may be obtained from Carl Soule.

NEW FILMSTRIP AVAILABLE

A filmstrip on the local church commission on Christian social relations, entitled A NEW KIND OF BUILDING, has just been completed for the three social actions boards (Temperance, Social and Economic Relations, and World Peace Done attractively in color and accompanied by a 33 1/3 r.p.m. recording, this filmstrip should be especially valuable in persuading church leaders to establish this important commission and in illustrating the kind of program it can undertake.

Order copies now from the Board of World Peace, 740 Rush St., Chicago 11, Illinois at $8.00 each.

NEW PAMPHLETS ON THE UNITED NATIONS

Pocket Reference on the United Nations, by the League of Women Voters. A brief, convenient, and factual leaflet on the UN, its specialized agencies, its accomplishments, its cost, and its pending problems. 10¢ each, 25 for $1.00.

A United Nations Audit: 1957, by the U.S. Committee for the UN. An attractive folder emphasizing the accomplishments of the UN and citing specific facts on cost to each American 5¢ each for postage and handling.

MOVIES DOWNGRADING WAR

"It seems a notable coincidence that we are getting at this critical time (as we did in the 1930's) such blisteringly anti-militarist films as 'The Bridge on the River Kwai' and ('Paths of Glory')--or such strangely ambivalent attemps to show the basic comradeship of all men in battle such as we get in 'The Enemy Below' or 'The Pursuit of the Graf Spee.'....

"For all the present international arms race, the movies are down-grading militarists and war

Bosley Crowther in The New York Times

EUROPEAN STUDY TOUR

A five-week study tour of western Europe is being organized by Daniel Taylor and Herman Will of the Board of World Peace staff. Departing about July 1 by air, a group of about thirty-five persons, mostly Methodists, will visit England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, and Denmark, with brief stops in Belgium and Austria.

The group will travel largely by chartered bus on the continent and will visit headquarters of UNESCO, NATO, ILO, FAO, and the World Council of Churches, as well as Methodist work abroad. Major stops will include London, Paris Geneva, Rome, Berlin, and Copenhagen.

The tour fee of $925 includes virtually all travel expenses with only a few minor exception Interested persons should write directly to Herman Will or Daniel Taylor at 740 Rush Street Chicago 11, Illinois.